

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
THE SUPERIOR COURT  
New Courthouse, 13th Floor  
Pemberton Square  
Boston, Massachusetts 02108**

**LAW CLERK TO THE JUSTICES OF THE SUPERIOR COURT  
OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**

**POSITION PROSPECTUS  
2009-2010**

A Massachusetts Superior Court Clerkship offers a dynamic legal environment. This trial court clerkship provides an unmatched opportunity to do intensive writing and research and to observe courtroom practice. Law clerks routinely attend motion hearings and portions of trials. During trials, law clerks may attend bench and lobby conferences and help the judges with evidentiary issues, jury impanelment questions, and jury charges. Law clerks usually work simultaneously with several judges on various cases and have direct access to the judges to discuss legal issues.

Law clerk duties encompass every aspect of court procedure and all legal issues within the court's jurisdiction. Under the guidance and supervision of the Chief Justice, the eighty Associate Justices, and the Manager and Assistant Manager of Legal Research, law clerks prepare memoranda and write draft decisions for the judges. Subject matters include a broad spectrum of civil and criminal law. Assignments range from in-depth research on unsettled questions of law to quick-answer research of evidentiary issues arising during trials. Law clerk offices are lively open settings where clerks routinely exchange ideas, information, and experiences.

Each year, the Justices of the Superior Court hire approximately 54 law school graduates of outstanding ability to serve as law clerks. Approximately six are assigned to Western Massachusetts. The law clerks will serve a one-year term from September 1, 2009 until August 31, 2010 at a salary of approximately \$47,000. Employee benefits include subsidized health, dental, and vision insurance, ten days of paid vacation time and three days of paid personal time.

The central law clerks' office is located in downtown Boston. The main office for law clerks assigned to Western Massachusetts is in the Hampden County Courthouse in Springfield.

Because the Superior Court is a circuit court, both the judges and the law clerks rotate among various county courthouses. Law clerks generally move every three months to different courthouses where they have the opportunity to work with a new group of judges and law clerks. All law clerks assigned to Eastern Massachusetts will spend approximately six to nine months rotating to courthouses beyond Suffolk and Middlesex Counties. Law clerks assigned to Western Massachusetts will be required to travel to courthouses outside Springfield. Accordingly, a reliable car is a requirement for the clerkship.

Clerkships are open to distinguished graduates of law schools throughout the country. Both recent law school graduates and practicing attorneys are invited to apply for the positions. Excellent writing, communication, and accurate research skills are absolutely necessary, as are high professional and ethical standards. Neither prior Massachusetts residency nor bar membership is a prerequisite to employment. However, all law clerks must reside in Massachusetts during the duration of their clerkship.

**AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER**

**SUPERIOR COURT CLERKSHIP  
APPLICATION PROCEDURE  
2009-2010**

Interested candidates should submit the following:

1. **Cover Letter.** Cover letters should be addressed to **Linda Layne**, Manager of Legal Research Services or **Romeo Camba**, Assistant Manager of Legal Research Services. Please note in your cover letter whether you wish to be considered for an Eastern Massachusetts clerkship **or** a Western Massachusetts clerkship.
2. **Résumé.**
3. **Law School Transcript/Academic Record.** The transcript should cover the applicant's first two years (three years for evening students) in law school and bear the registrar's raised seal.
4. **Two Writing Samples.** The writing samples should demonstrate the candidate's ability to analyze legal problems and apply legal principles to factual settings. Writing samples should not be lengthy; five to seven pages are sufficient. They must be solely the work of the candidate and may not be edited by another.
5. **Two Recommendations.** Two personal letters of recommendation which evaluate the applicant's organizational skills, character, and legal research and writing abilities are required. A letter addressed "To Whom It May Concern" will be accepted only if it is dated after January 1, 2008 and assesses the candidate's legal skills. Letters of endorsement from a law school Judicial Clerkship Committee are welcome, but do not substitute for one of the two required letters of recommendation.
6. **Self-addressed Stamped Envelope.** Please submit a self-addressed stamped envelope if you would like our office to acknowledge the completion of your application. It is the **applicant's responsibility** to ensure that all materials are either postmarked or received by **September 19, 2008**. Only applications received by September 12, 2008 will be acknowledged as received.
7. **Trial Court Application.** You can obtain a trial court application at any Massachusetts state courthouse. You may also download the trial court application from the Internet at **<http://trialcourtweb.jud.state.ma.us/admin/hr/application.pdf>**.

Applications will be accepted from **June 1, 2008 through September 19, 2008**. In order for your materials to be considered, your application must be received or **postmarked** by September 19, 2008. You are not required to send all materials in one package. Applications and inquiries should be addressed as follows:

**Linda M. Layne (if your last name begins with A-L) or  
Romeo Camba (if your last name begins with M-Z)  
Superior Court Administrative Office  
Suffolk County Courthouse, 13th Floor  
3 Pemberton Square  
Boston, Massachusetts 02108**

The Committee will interview only those applicants considered most qualified. Interviews are conducted in the fall, and hiring decisions are usually made by the end of November. Applicants attending out-of-state law schools who wish to schedule an earlier (summer) initial interview should indicate this in their cover letter.

**PLEASE NOTE** that incomplete and late application packages will not be considered. We **CANNOT** make any exceptions. If you have any questions regarding this application procedure please call **Linda Layne or Romeo Camba** at (617) 788-8130, or e-mail them at **[linda.layne@jud.state.ma.us](mailto:linda.layne@jud.state.ma.us)** or **[romeo.camba@jud.state.ma.us](mailto:romeo.camba@jud.state.ma.us)**.

## **PREPARING YOUR CLERKSHIP APPLICATION**

### **1. RESEARCH AND WRITING EXPERIENCE**

We encourage applicants to take advantage of every opportunity to gain research and writing experience and to highlight their research and writing skills in their résumés and cover letters.

During law school, students may gain research and writing experience through research/teaching positions, independent studies, or writing papers or journal/law review articles. Students often gain the most valuable research and writing experience from summer law clerk positions, co-op positions, internships, and part-time legal work. If you participate on moot court boards or in clinical programs, you should highlight the research and writing components of these experiences on your résumé.

### **2. WRITING SAMPLES**

The Superior Court requires two writing samples. We read the writing samples carefully looking for the applicant's ability to analyze legal problems and apply legal principles to different factual situations. Please do not submit lengthy writing samples; they need be no longer than five (5) pages; a section of a longer memo will suffice.

Writing samples must be solely the work of the applicant, that is, unedited by others. Briefs or opinions signed by someone other than the applicant and law review articles are considered to be edited.

We suggest that you proofread your writing samples carefully for grammar, punctuation, citation form, and organization. Writing samples are a critical part of your application. We emphasize the importance of submitting your best work.

### **3. COVER LETTERS**

We read cover letters thoroughly and often learn a great deal about the applicant from them. Cover letters are another opportunity to highlight one's experiences, interests, and individuality. It is essential that cover letters be well-written and proofread carefully. Please note, if you are interested in Western Massachusetts, please indicate this in your cover letter.

### **4. RÉSUMÉS**

Résumés are miniature biographies. Applicants should include their academic background, school activities, legal work, and other legal research and writing experiences. Additionally, students working throughout law school to finance their education whether in law-related or nonlegal positions should include this information on their résumés.

### **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The strongest letters of recommendation attest to the applicant's research, writing, and analytical skills as well as to his or her character and ability to produce quality work under time constraints. We suggest that the letters of recommendation include the relationship to the applicant of the person writing the letter.

The Superior Court requires two letters of recommendation, but you may send more. Letters can be from two professors or two employers, or one letter from each. In reviewing applications, we find it helpful to read evaluations of your work and character from both an academic and work-related point of view. If you were recently employed or are currently working in the legal profession, we suggest that you ask your employer to write a letter on your behalf.

### **6. ACADEMIC CREDENTIALS**

While excellent academic standing is an important factor, we also look for highly motivated, well-rounded law students and attorneys who have demonstrated their research, analytical, and writing skills throughout law school and in their professional pursuits.